

This is an area of the world where some people, of which the Baathist Party in Iraq is an example, have viewed the Byzantine Empire as the time when everything was right and the Mideast was the center of the world; and that, today, is an aberration. And many of those people have tried to find in the history of the 20th century quick-fix solutions to change that and rewrite the world as they see it.

Before World War II, and the Baathist Party is an example of this, they attempted Fascism while they supported the Axis powers until they realized that was not the access that they needed. They flirted briefly with Communism in the 1950s before they found that was not an access that was needed. They tried the Pan-Arabism of Nasser in the 1950s and 1960s and they found that was not the access. And, today, many of these elements have used terror as, hopefully, the access to right the world.

If this country is ever going to have a future, it must ensure that terrorism is never viewed as a successful policy by any state or any subgroup of a state to try and change the world.

Historians have praised Lincoln for the same qualities that his contemporary critics blamed him for. Historians, I am convinced, will pass praise on America's policies in Iraq which have ended a dictatorship of 30 years, mired in blood and horror and terror that destabilized his region with the ultimate goal of destabilizing the entire world.

It is right what we have done to try to restore the balance in the world.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mrs. BLACKBURN addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

PROTECTING OUR FUTURE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. MCCOTTER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. MCCOTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise for the purpose to speak on Iraq and maybe address a couple of myths or omissions that may have been missed in this.

First, many of my constituents are Iraqi-Americans and much of what we hear today in some quarters is oddly reminiscent of what we heard in this country for about 140 years. There are those people who have claimed that the Iraqi people know nothing but an oppressive dictatorial government and that they will never take to democracy. They will never be able to take control of their lives and form a better future.

In the past, within this country, we heard those same remarks made by

slave owners trying to justify that African Americans should not be free. I think this is doing a horrible disservice to the Iraqi people whenever they hear from this country, from whatever corridor, that they will not take to democracy.

The United States is an experiment in democracy based on the thought that through our revolution all people would see that liberty is to be enjoyed, defended and savored. The Iraqi people will do no less than we did at our own inception.

Secondly, I think that in the fallout over Spain's decision in the wake of the terrorist attack to leave the Coalition, many people have been led to believe that the terrorists will only attack those whose foreign policy is a problem for the terrorists. And yet little noted is that the French Government has decided that Muslims cannot wear traditional headdresses in their public schools have now become also a potential target for terrorist attack.

Let us be clear here, it is not simply a matter of foreign policy as to whether the terrorists attack you or not, whether you are American or whether you are European. The whole goal is to affect lives, be it the foreign policy decisions or your internal decisions of your own government.

Which I think gets to a third myth, which is that some people believe that we through our actions will determine what the terrorists will do or not do to us.

Having seen al Qaeda's motto, for want of a better word, I do not see any exception to their belief that it is a Muslim duty to kill American soldiers and civilians. There is no codicil. There is no caveat. And I would encourage Americans to do what many in Europe did not do upon initially reading Mein Kampf, that you are best to take a lunatic at his word, especially when he talks about killing you, killing your children and destroying your way of life.

In the overarching context of the situation in Iraq, the stakes could not be higher, and I believe that many people in both parties agree with that. If we fail in Iraq, the success we have had in helping to eradicate terrorism there and throughout the world will be dealt a major blow.

If we choose to retreat from that commitment, if we choose to pull back to our own borders and try to rely upon intelligence and law enforcement, as we did prior to September 11, we are going to be faced with a terrible situation of prolonging the war on terror. Because if we do not take the war to the terrorists, as we have done in Iraq, as we have done in Afghanistan, then the terrorists will bring their attacks to us and we will prolong the war on terror well into the lives of our grandchildren. And I do not think that that is a situation anyone in this country, in this Chamber would like to see.

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It is easy sometimes when we look back, we were told after we defeated

European communism that it was the end of history, that liberal democracy would face no external threat capable of destroying it. It was tempting to believe it; but as we found out, it turned out not to be the case.

As a revolutionary country, as I stated before, we are always going to be a target for terrorists, tyrants and other despots bent on world domination. It is unfair to us, we who seek to live in liberty and seek to have amity with our neighbors and our international community; but liberty is our blessing. It is also our burden, and it is a burden generations of Americans before us have shouldered and is a burden our brave men and women in Iraq and the military are shouldering now and one we cannot turn our back on. For if we do, we will not only be inviting more terrorist attacks here, we will be renouncing our birth right as Americans to live in freedom and renouncing our duty to defend it.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BURGESS). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. DAVIS of Illinois addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. FEENEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. FEENEY addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. WYNN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. WYNN addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. NORTON addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. DEFAZIO addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York (Mr. MEEKS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. MEEKS of New York addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)